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# sculpting *the* suburban landscape

**‘The taste of the English in the cultivation of the land, and in what is called landscape gardening, is unrivalled. They have studied nature intently, and discover an exquisite sense of her beautiful forms and harmonising combinations.’**

Washington Irving (1783-1859), *The Sketch Book*, ‘Rural Life in England’

MoDA’s Sixth Annual Outdoor Show ‘Sculpting the Suburban Landscape’ challenges the notion of the English traditional domestic garden in multi-cultural Britain. It complements MoDA’s indoor exhibition, *The Suburban Landscape: Two Hundred years of Gardens and Gardening*.

Each of the ten plots, five front gardens and five back gardens, has been ‘landscaped’ by artists with a keen eye on the changing nature of the garden. The demise of the status of the English rose in the Victorian garden (with its hybrids named after duchesses, princesses and millionaires’ wives), and the new obsession with jewel-encrusted mobile phones and designer ‘Bling-Bling’ jewellery is captured in the Hedged Garden in Plot 6. One of the most striking 20th century gardens, made by wishful thinkers, artists and writers in the most unusual and inhospitable of spaces, is acknowledged in the stone area between Plots 4 & 5. The austerity, formality and structure imposed by the Institute of Landscape Architects, founded in 1929, on garden designers, is relayed by the time-based ‘solar-etched’ motifs on the lawn created by the ever-changing effects of sunlight in Plot 9.

Gardens are places where plants, adults, children, and wildlife interact. Some are welcome and others not. The unwelcome visitors are greeted with a scarecrow to frighten them off, such as the variety found in Plot 2. Those that are welcome are treated like visitors to a National Trust Garden, entertained with a family day out with theme park attractions. The spirit of this is captured in Plot 10, the site of a large interactive pages from a gardening book that visitors can engage with. And Plot 3 is the home of bubbles of diverse objects, with which the suburbanite visitor can ‘interact’, like a cross-pollinating bee.

Suburban gardens have traditionally been sources of pride and an opportunity to ‘keep up with the Joneses’. Pride is now being replaced by practicalities, with washing lines full of clothes such as those found in Plot 8, whilst Plot 5 celebrates the beginnings of a carport (paving over the existing garden sculptures), as parking restrictions and the congestion charge force cars off the streets into the front garden. And Plot 4 explores the way in which, after a heavy night’s partying, the revellers are met by next morning’s broken bottles and a private garden of weeds, ready for the next night’s excesses.

The garden has shifted from a haven of peace, tranquillity and beauty to a means of coping with modern day indulgences, with the accumulation of possessions overflowing from the house into the shed. However in Plot 7, the painted canvases in the garden shed, and the caravan in Plot 1 (both a stationary retreat and a movable refuge full of gardening tips) remind us of the pleasures of ‘landscaping’ the English Garden.

## Plot 1



**Julia Dennis**

***The Untold***

**Caravan, memorabilia**

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With the impact of migration and immigration, the concept of 'refuge' will be familiar to a diverse range of people living in Britain today. Julia Dennis explores the garden as a place of 'refuge', a special place, a place of beauty and shelter, where you can do as you please. She uses the caravan as a sculptural 'retreat', a symbol of transience and travel: here the landscapes of memory have a place to remember and re-invent. Through imagination and fantasy, hidden worlds are uncovered, creating an installation of deep thought and delight.

Julia's artwork has been influenced by her own experiences of transience and change having lived in different parts of Europe and overseas. She has also designed EU and British Council funded cross-cultural projects in art and design. The meeting of diverse cultures in a creative context has given the opportunity for people of different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds to have a deeper understanding of one another through the exchange of ideas and project development.

In 2003 Julia Dennis completed an MA in Fine Art from Brighton University and has exhibited regularly since. Julia also lectures in Fine Art at various institutions and has been a course leader of Fine Art for many years. Julia often works in sculpture, using resins, fiberglass, textiles and wood. She also uses photography and video. In the summer she will also be exhibiting with a group of ex-Goldsmith artists at the Auto Italia Gallery in London and in Deptford on the River Thames on an old fishing vessel.

*Julia would like to thank Mr and Mrs Scruton who were kind enough to deliver the caravan from their home in Bridlington, in North Yorkshire to Wapping, without whose help the task of developing this project would have been much harder.*

## Plot 2



**Elaine Arkell**

**Pests and Personalities**

Mixed media including familiar recycled domestic/horticultural materials and objects.

[arkangell58@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:arkangell58@yahoo.co.uk)

Flummoxed by Long Handled Loppers and Suckers? Defeated by Die-Back? No, these aren't regulars at your Local, but mere trifles for Alan Titchmarsh - man of iconic professional horticulturalist status. Known to millions, this gardener extraordinaire is not just the face of composting and water conservation, but television personality and author of both garden books and novels. Who better to keep birds and pests at bay?

The relationship between man and bird is as long as agriculture itself, but often very uneasy: it has given rise to the equally global scarecrow. The definition of scarecrow is an effigy in the shape of a man to frighten the birds away from the seeds.

Elaine Arkell's site-specific sculptural investigations reflect current cultural obsessions as she interrogates notions of value and use. She explores the durability of everyday mundane materials, from plastic carrier bags and telecom wire, to the now almost redundant cassette tape to produce often quite ephemeral objects and drawings. Elaine has made and shown work since graduation from Central St Martin's College of Art and Design in 2003, and she is a current member of The London Biennale.

Elaine Arkell's work is complemented by that of leading community artist, Cheryl James, who has worked with children from two primary and secondary schools in the development of a parallel arts project, creating scarecrows to explore the use of recycled materials.

## Plot 3



**Sen McGlinn + Sonja van Kerkhoff**

***Cross Pollination***

**Metal, wood, papier mache, plastic**

[www.sonjavank.com/crossp.htm](http://www.sonjavank.com/crossp.htm)

[sonja@bahai-library.com](mailto:sonja@bahai-library.com) [www.sonjavank.com/sensonja](http://www.sonjavank.com/sensonja)

*Cross Pollination* is a playful interpretation of the metaphor of cultural cross-pollination in a multicultural world.

The flowers bloom bubbles of diverse objects, objects which relate to various modes of communication or expression. And the visitors are invited to become the bees.

Sen McGlinn and Sonja van Kerkhoff were born and raised in Aotearoa (New Zealand). Sen has degrees in English Literature and Islamic Studies, Sonja in visual arts and media technology. Much of their work relates to the human condition as an inter-penetration of the spiritual and material. Sometimes they work individually and other times with others in various media (including video, interactive installations, performance, sculpture and text work).

#### Plot 4



**Catherine Gamble**  
***The 'Petit Versailles' of a Drinker***  
Broken bottles, plants

wasticat@yahoo.co.uk

The suburban garden has long been used as an area to express one's status, for recreation, and for practical purposes.

*The 'Petit Versailles' of a Drinker* has pretensions to a classical formal garden such as Versailles, with its connotations of grandeur, while its substance references the historical practice of hiding rubbish and glass bottles under hedges in suburban areas (the low parterre hedges are made of beer bottles).

The beer and wine bottles used in this installation also represent another common use of the suburban garden, as a space for enjoyment and relaxation. The bottles which once contained alcohol are now used to construct the physical space.

Catherine Gamble is a garden designer, project manager and glass artist. Graduate of Oxford University (French) and Stirling University (Japanese and finance), she spent ten years in the corporate sector prior to retraining as a garden designer in 2002. She now has her own practice working as a garden designer in London and the south of France. Due to a long standing interest in ceramics and glass, she has also designed and built large glass installation projects.

Catherine works in various media that combine colour and light. Her objective is to produce site specific design that reinterprets historical and cultural references with a contemporary perspective. She has designed and built a number of private gardens, as well as exhibiting at Chelsea Flower Show (2004, silver medal) and at the MoDA 'Grounds for Design' exhibition (2005).

#### In-between Plot 4 and Plot 5



**Jolanta Jagiello**  
***How Does Your Garden Grow?***  
Found twisted metal, rusty and broken garden tools

j.jagiello@care4free.net

*'How does your Garden Grow?'* is inspired by Derek Jarman's garden at Prospect Cottage where he created shingle garden from debris he found on the beach at Dungeness. Given the inhospitable conditions at Dungeness, Jarman had initially

little hope of establishing a garden, but he succeeded using local plants and stones to form large circular beds.

This stone garden is a celebration of the hardiness of plants to survive the most daunting conditions. By collecting broken garden tools and pieces of twisted metal found on the site, the artist has created hardy garden 'plants'. Like Derek Jarman, Jolanta Jagiello has turned rusty old discarded gardening tools into artistic treasures.

Jolanta Jagiello, ARBS, is a welded metal sculptor and a freelance curator with an MA Arts Policy and Management from Birkbeck College. She has exhibited in solo shows at Changing Room Gallery, and Fovea Gallery, and in group shows at Space Station Sixty-five, V&A, MoDA, Morley Galley, and Synergy Gallery.

Jolanta regularly curates the Annual Outdoor Group Show at MoDA. In 2005 she curated, 'Open Desk After School' in the nineteenth century reconstructed Victorian classroom at the Ragged School Museum, and 'Zoo-A-logical', based on research at the London Zoo, in the Knapp Gallery during Frieze Art Fair, Regents Park. In 2006, Jolanta curated, 'Dream Landings' in the Bedding Department of John Lewis Watford, during Black History Month, nominated in the Creativity, and Diversity categories at the Arts and Business Awards 2007, and highly commended at the Drawing Inspiration Awards 2007.

#### Plot 5



**Amrit Row**  
***The New Suburban Garden***  
Hedging, concrete paving, statuary, hardcore

www.amritrow.com amrit@amritrow.com

*'New Suburban Garden'* suggests that multiculturalism, as it exists in the suburbs, is mediated by the need to fit in; and that a degree of wealth that is part of the suburban experience is a great social leveler where all gods are banished to hardcore rubble

The path from the entrance point consists of the traditional suburban arrangement of box hedges, crazy paving and mass-produced statuary. This leads to the proposed 'patio' of those same ornaments crushed up and bedded in a weak concrete mix but done so as to still recognize the individual elements from which they came.

Following a stepping stone crazy paved path around the back of the trees, one arrives at a construction site. The new car park is almost ready!

Amrit Row is a fine artist and garden designer and has shown work widely both here and abroad. From the paintings and drawings in his early work in the 80s, he now makes digital ultrachrome prints and sculptural interventions. He continues to realise garden projects and this, his first public art installation, marks a turning point in a long career as an artist.



## Plot 6



### **Darryl Moore** ***All That Glitters***

Garden arbours, roses, jewellery

dmoore.design@virgin.net

Since its inception the garden has been an expression of personal and cultural power, reflecting social relationships. Such expressions run through English history, from the flamboyant display of wealth by eighteenth century estate owners re-shaping nature in their landscape parks, through to twentieth century suburban homeowners assuming airs and trying to keep up with, or out-do, the neighbours, in their domestic plots.

Design styles, horticultural knowledge, ornaments and garden architecture have all played roles in creating allusions, aesthetic sensibilities, and notions of national identity. The traditional garden arbour covered in climbing roses was once ubiquitous as a sign of tasteful English-ness, representing socio-economic aspirations and cultural kudos.

But today taste finds expression in multiple and constantly changing forms. In an age of cultural relativity, traditional notions of English 'good taste' are only tentative, simply one choice among many, in the sea of consumerism and media-fuelled displays of materialism.

Utilising two garden arbours, facing each other, as if in an ongoing conversation, the work presents an environment with contrasting cultural values? One arbour is presented in the traditional English manner, entwined with climbing roses, whilst the other is adorned with gold 'Bling'\* style jewellery, representing a contemporary urban sensibility, which has spread from city centres to the heartlands of suburbia.

Darryl Moore's practice investigates physical environments and the social relationships inherent in them. Drawing upon studies in Art History, Philosophy and Garden Design, his works engage with the ideological elements, which construct spaces, and define notions of place. Utilising strategies of displacement, his installations employ familiar everyday objects from garden and urban landscape contexts, to deconstruct social and historical assumptions, and to reveal the complexities and contradictions within cultural relationships.

Recent works have been exhibited at Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf, Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture, London, and Ragged School Museum, London. As a Garden Designer and writer, he has designed many show gardens, including the silver medal winning Woolworths garden at Chelsea Flower show 2004

## Plot 7



### **Grace Adam** ***Suburban Gardens***

Garden shed, painted canvases

grace@graceadam.com

Through *Suburban Gardens*, the artist Grace Adam extends her explorations into what we choose to cultivate. Grace is a keen gardener but, like lots of urban dwellers, she has a terrace not a garden. Through this installation piece she explores the idea of the transformation in status of ordinary things through the act of looking at them more closely, putting them together in a way that makes us look afresh.

The value we assign to plants, tools and furniture may be connected purely to their usefulness, or it may be aesthetic, sentimental, or financial. The shed itself reflects the idea of getting away from it all - a place for small tasks, quietness, pondering and daydreams.

Traditionally the still life genre is a celebration/exploration of material pleasures. Objects often function as reminders of transience and frailty. The canvases inside the shed juxtapose images from the memories and realities of gardeners Grace has met. Together, the space and the images celebrate the importance and meaning of the everyday; images gleaned from conversations, photographs and drawings come together into small still lives. Viewed outside their conventional setting they are at once formal, intimate and odd.

The paintings and drawings reference ideas of town-planning, DIY, paper models and notions of chaos, order and what can be beautiful. Grace Adam seeks to question the status of some of the man-made and natural objects that we live with. Gardening represents pleasure and creativity for many people. Equally, there are those who use gardens as extra storage. Our gardens, whatever form they take, fulfill very different functions in our lives.

Grace Adam is an artist fascinated with the way in which we live. Her current body of work explores structures; permanent buildings and the low-level ambient structures that come and go that we barely even notice. Her interest ranges from overwhelming, utilitarian factories and power stations to bike sheds and signs; daily environmental beauty and detritus.

## Plot 8



**Deborah Gardner**  
***The International Line***  
Washing lines, clothes, wax  
sculpture4@btinternet.com

Deborah Gardner has often been fascinated by the visual beauty of the lines of washing we all pin out to dry. They form a physical link from one neighbour and one community to another, a visual interconnection of many lives, all sharing a common desire to launder our clothes. The lines of washing are common landmarks occupying the space of our gardens on a dry or sunny day. At the end of winter, the clothes billowing in the wind seem to wave in the new season and each line of washing tells its own story and reflects on the household within.

The clothes in *The International Line* are cast in cement, permanently held hanging or flying in the wind. The range of clothes on this line reflects a variety of households and the casts act as concretised memories of a temporary situation. The dynamic, yet permanent configurations of clothes blowing in the wind signify the ever-transforming lifestyles, communities and suburbs of cities and towns.

Deborah Gardner is a sculptor and Lecturer in Contemporary Art Practice at the University of Leeds. On completing her Master of Fine Arts Degree from Newcastle University, she won a year long British Council travel scholarship. She then completed the artist residency at Durham Cathedral before moving to Yorkshire. She has completed residencies and fellowships in England, Spain and Australia.

Deborah's work has been exhibited widely in both group and solo exhibitions in the UK, Europe and overseas. Most recent exhibitions include *In Memoriam* at the Camellia House, Bretton Hall, Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the forthcoming exhibition *So near, so far* at the Ebersberg Kunstverein, Germany. Deborah is also currently a member of the artists' group *That which is near*.

## Plot 9



**Mari Terauchi**  
***Play with me, watch with me***  
Tent 180cm width 200cm height  
kawaiinoe@hotmail.com

'*Play with me, watch with me*' is in the form of a large-scale book which contrasts English and Japanese gardens.

Mari Terauchi's work provides visitors with the opportunity to experience the traditions and the differences evident in the gardens and the countries themselves. People in England enjoy being 'in' their gardens, whether looking at ornaments, sitting on a bench reading a book or playing in a maze. To show this harmony between people and the garden, visitors can play and create their English garden within Mari Terauchi's book.

In comparison with an English garden, Japanese gardens, especially Kare-Sansui, have been created for Zen meditation: people sit in front of the gardens and merely look at them. Walking, touching or playing with their ornaments is strictly prohibited. Only garden masters maintain the garden. Kare-Sansui is simply placed in the book for people to sit at the edges of the garden and experience Zen meditation.

Mari Terauchi was born in Tokyo, Japan, where she is currently working. Terauchi graduated from Chelsea College of Art and Design in Fine Art in 2004.

Since Terauchi has been selected for 'Sound Out', organized by Richard Wilson in 2004, she has exhibited her work internationally in selected group exhibitions. Her work includes in 2005 'Japan' at Stroud House Gallery, 'Open Desk After School' at Ragged School Museum, London, and in 2004 'Full Circle' at Temple Bar Gallery, Ireland.

Mari Terauchi is gallery artist with Gallery Apart, London and Zandari, South Korea. With Zandari she has shown her work in South Korea and China. With her former curator at Zandari she exhibited at Sejul Gallery in South Korea and most recently Terauchi in '21st Juried Show' at the Visual Arts Centre of New Jersey U.S.A.

## Plot 10



**Sumi Perera**  
***Mad Dogs And Englishmen***  
Underwear, sun, grass & solar lights  
sumi\_perera@hotmail.com

The practice of tanning in one's rear garden and the resultant lace curtain twitchers in suburban landscapes is addressed in this artwork. Lace underwear will be stiffened and arranged to make giant doilies to be placed on the grass lawn. Over the period of the fourteen week exhibition, these patterns will be rotated on a fortnightly basis to observe and record the effects of sunlight.

The public are invited to control the arrangements and photographic documentation of this timed-based artwork will be kept. The resultant changes will also be illuminated by solar lamps. In this present climate of 'size zero' and 'carbon zero' babble, this evolving photo-etching will enable the viewer to reflect on the beneficial and harmful effects of sunlight.

Sumi Perera, MA, MPhil, MSc, MBBS, invariably exploits her background in Medicine and Science in her artwork. She exhibits internationally (in the USA, Canada, Europe, Australia and South Korea) and was awarded the *Grand Prize*

[1st Prize & gold medal] at the 1st International Book Arts Competition, Seoul, South Korea; and the *Birgit Skiold Award* for excellence in Book Arts at the LAB '05, Institute of Contemporary Art in 2005.

Several of her works are held in the Tate Britain, the Yale Centre for British Art, the printROOM at Rotterdam, and the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, as well as several other public and private collections. She had a solo show at the Spread the Word Headquarters (2004) and has participated in several group shows including the Sixth British International Miniature Print Exhibition, BIMPE IV-The Fourth Biennial International Miniature Print Exhibition, Canada, art of the STITCH 2006 and BABE 2007 at the Arnolfini, Bristol.

#### Plot 00

*Indoors on staircase and exterior of the MoDA building*



**Paul Greco**

***House and Gardens***

Photographs and vinyl wall pieces

paul.greco@northampton.ac.uk

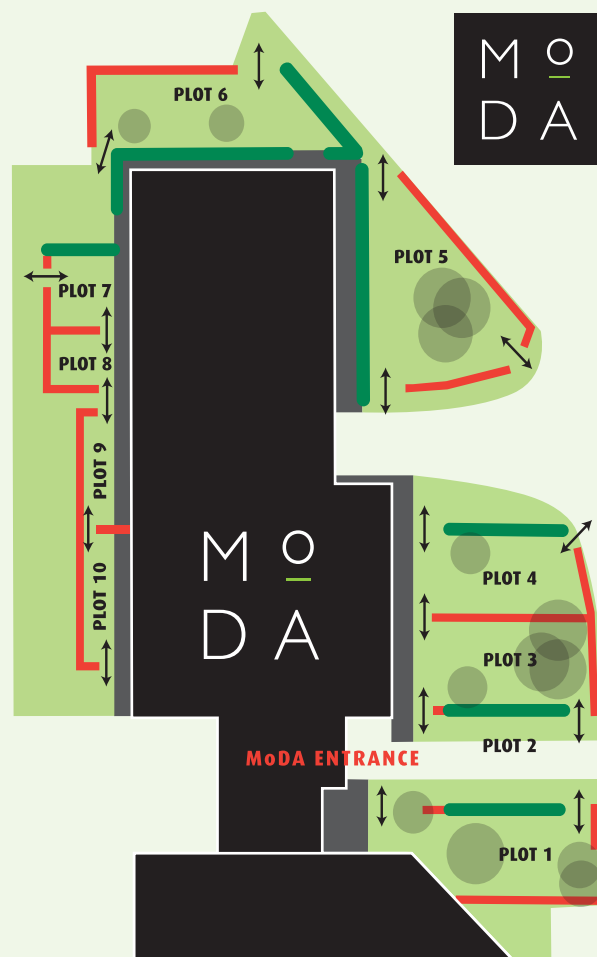
Paul Greco's work in this exhibition is in two parts. The first installation, on the museum staircase, is a personal response to the content and context of the indoor *Suburban Landscape: 200 years of Gardens and Gardening* exhibition, making reference to the archive material at MoDA. The second, consisting of vinyl pieces on the exterior fabric of the museum, relate to the themes and ideas of the outdoor sculpture exhibition. Paul's aim has been to create a link between the two exhibitions that encourages a dialogue between artist, visitor and museum.

Paul Greco is Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the University of Northampton. His recent work has developed from an involvement, as both curator and exhibitor, in shows that explore the use of research archives from museum collections, leading to work pertinent to site specific environments. This has stimulated an interest in the placement of work outside the traditions of the conventional gallery space.

Recent exhibitions include: 'Zoo-a-logical' – a group show responding to research at the London Zoological Society, 'What's for Dinner' at MoDA, 'Out of Print' at the University of Northampton Gallery, and 'Recollection' - an exhibition of visual, performance and text based work that responded to work from the Rugby Art Gallery collection.

**For your own safety, visitors are asked to kindly observe the signs indicating the maximum number of people in each plot at one time.**

**You are also requested not to smoke in the outdoor exhibition.**



## sculpting the suburban landscape

#### Exhibition Curator & Brochure Introduction

Jolanta Jagiello

#### Exhibition Fencing & Plots

Darryl Moore, Moore Design

#### Brochure Text & Photographs

Individual Artists and Paul Boocock

#### Exhibition Sponsors



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